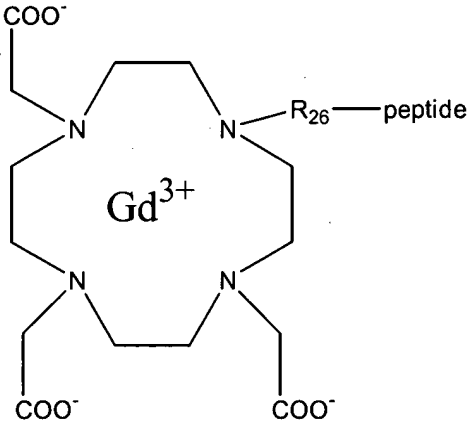
Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-21 (Cancelled)

22. (Currently amended) An activatible MRI agent having the formula:



or a salt thereof;
wherein R_{26} is a linker; and,
wherein upon interaction of said peptide with a protease, the T_1 of said MRI agent is decreased.

23. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a caspase.

24. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is an interleukin 1 beta-converting enzyme.

25. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a cysteine protease.

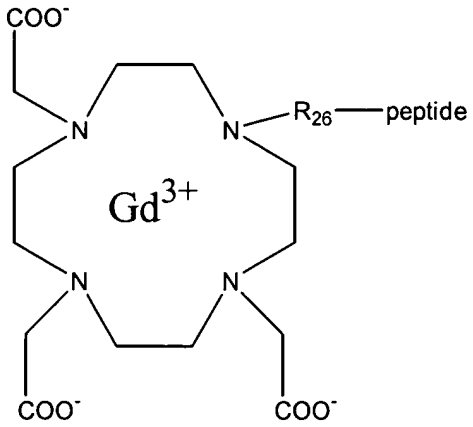
26. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a serine protease.

27. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a calpain.

28. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a cathepsin.

29. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a metalloproteinase.

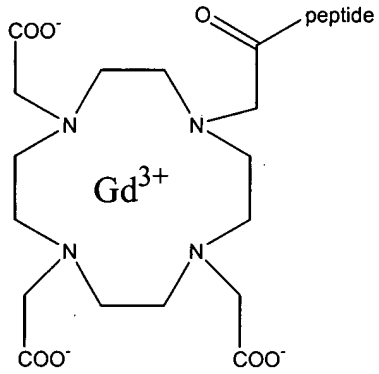
30. (Currently amended) A method comprising:
a) administering an activatible MRI agent to a tissue, cell or patient, said MRI agent having the formula:



or a salt thereof;
wherein R_{26} is a linker, and under conditions whereby said peptide interacts with a target substance in said tissue, cell or patient such that the T_1 of said MRI agent is decreased, and,
b) acquiring a magnetic resonance image of said cell, tissue or patient.

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Currently amended) A method of according to claim 30, said MRI agent having the formula:



or a salt thereof.

33. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 30 or 32, wherein said target substance is a protease and said peptide interacts with said protease.

34. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a caspase.

35. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a interleukin 1 beta-converting enzyme.

36. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a cysteine protease.

37. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a serine protease.

38. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a calpain.

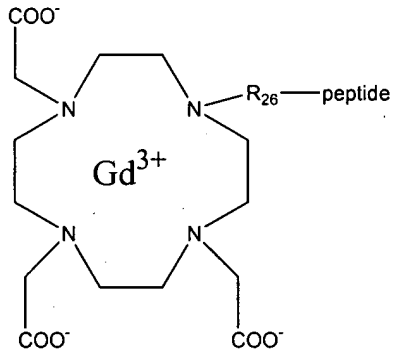
39. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a cathepsin.

40. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a metalloproteinase.

41. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 30 or 32, comprising administering a composition comprising said agent and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

42. (Currently amended) A method for targeting an MRI agent comprising:

a) administering an activatible MRI agent to a tissue, cell or patient, said MRI agent having the formula:



or a salt thereof;

wherein R_{26} is a linker; and,

b) contacting said peptide with a target substance such that upon interaction of said peptide with said target substance the T_1 value of said MRI agent is decreased[[;]], and said MRI agent accumulates at the location of said target substance.

43. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said peptide inhibits said protease.

44. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said peptide binds to said protease.

45. (Previously presented) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said peptide is a protease substrate.

46. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 30, 32, or 42 wherein said peptide inhibits said protease.

47. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 30, 32, or 42 wherein said peptide binds to said protease.

48. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 30, 32, or 42 wherein said peptide is a protease substrate.

49. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 42, wherein R_{26} comprises -$((CH_2)CO)$-.

50. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 42, wherein said target substance is a protease and said peptide interacts with said protease.

51. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a caspase.

52. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a interleukin 1 beta-converting enzyme.

53. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a cysteine protease.

54. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a serine protease.

55. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a calpain.

56. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a cathepsin.

57. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a metalloproteinase.

58. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 42, comprising administering a composition comprising said agent and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.